

BOOK NOTICE

Medical Entomology. BY ROBERT MATHESON, Ph.D. Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Ill., 1932. xii + 490 pp. 211 fig. Price \$5.00, postpaid.

The science of medicine is usually thought of in connection with chemistry, bacteriology, clinical thermometers and the like and hardly ever in connection with entomology. I venture the guess that many physicians, in our temperate zone at least, are only dimly aware of the part that some insects play as carriers of disease. On the other hand, we have some over-zealous medical entomologists who magnify the disease-carrying possibilities of certain insects upon the basis of rather flimsy evidence, when as a matter of fact, the insects in question are no more important in the spread of human diseases than are door knobs and paper money. And when it comes to emphasizing loss of sleep, loss of blood, and nervous reactions due to the activities of certain insects, such results are caused infinitely more often by non-entomological agencies and in many cases require no more medical attention than baldness. Medical entomology certainly has a better excuse for existing, than the alleviation of minor inconveniences. This may seem like a carping introduction to Dr. Matheson's book, but it should not be taken as such, for I am only relieving myself of some opinions in general.

Dr. Matheson's *Medical Entomology* is a well written, concise and well organized account of arthropods and human diseases. In this book, the student will find a brief historical account of the more important investigators and their work. Following this, the author plunges at once into the main subjects, Acarina and Hexapoda. Keys are given for the separation of groups. Morphology, biology and distribution are discussed, then the members of the groups in their relation to diseases, and finally methods of control. At the end of each chapter numerous references are cited so that the student may be able, if desirable, to refer to more detailed information. As is to be expected, the bulk of the book is devoted to insects and of these the Diptera

occupy a relatively large space. The last two chapters are devoted to poisonous and urticating arthropods and to methods of collecting and preserving insects. Adequate author and subject indexes are provided. The illustrations are good, many of them apparently having been prepared especially for the book. It would be possible to be specific about certain species of which Dr. Matheson has written, but this would only be useless repetition. Dr. Matheson's entomological abilities are well recognized and he has produced a book which may be unhesitatingly recommended as a text wherever medical entomology is taught. Being a Thomas book, the physical qualities are, of course, satisfactory.—Harry B. Weiss.